

FIRST SELECTMAN ANNOUNCES EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE REFORMS IN THE WAKE OF THE HOLDSWORTH REPORT

Herbst: “The Town of Trumbull intends to move quickly in implementing these reforms so we may ensure that our Emergency Medical Services provide the best possible service and care to our residents”

January 14, 2013 - - First Selectman Timothy M. Herbst on Monday indicated that the Town of Trumbull intends to move forward decisively in implementing the findings of the Holdsworth Report and pledged to do everything possible to assist the Trumbull EMS Commission in hiring a new Chief of Operations in short order. The First Selectman approached the Board of Finance last year seeking funding for a system efficiency audit of the Trumbull EMS service based upon an earlier internal audit that showed deficiencies and problem areas that needed to be addressed. The Holdsworth Group, LLC, based in Cromwell, Connecticut was the company selected to perform the audit. In addition to interviewing key personnel, the Holdsworth Group also reviewed relevant financial data concerning billing and also elicited feedback from volunteers in the Trumbull EMS service, both past and present. The Board of Finance met last week with the First Selectman to receive the findings of the audit.

First Selectman Herbst indicated that the audit was clear in its recommendation that the Trumbull EMS lacked a clear chain of command. As a result, administrative functions and personnel decisions suffered over time. Volunteer service and participation has also declined over time. The First Selectman indicated that the Town would move quickly in providing a clear chain of command for the service and this starts with the appointment of a qualified Chief of Trumbull EMS. “The Town of Trumbull intends to move quickly in implementing these reforms so we may ensure that Trumbull EMS provides the best possible service and care to our residents. Just like our police and fire departments, our EMS department must also have a chief. There is bipartisan support for this effort. Immediate action is required and I will not delay in taking this action.” The First Selectman indicated that he would be nominating two new commissioners later this week. He indicated that the nominees would have strong credentials that would serve the Town well. “The report was very clear that in addition to having a strong chain of command that is led by a qualified individual, there also needs to be a clear delineation of duties between the commission and the staff. The audit indicated that there was too much interference from EMS Commissioners that were making day to day administrative decisions, supplanting their judgment for that of paid personnel hired to run the service. The EMS Commission adopts policy and the staff is responsible for day to day operations. This is the litmus test that I will apply to any candidate seeking appointment to the EMS Commission.” There are seven members of the EMS Commission, who each serve for a term of seven years. The First Selectman indicated that recent resignations have created vacancies that he would move quickly to fill. The First Selectman also indicated that there are many dedicated

volunteers who have given years of service to EMS that should be commended. He said that there are members of the commission eager to embrace the reforms outlined in the audit.

The First Selectman concluded that the recent weather related emergencies the Town has experienced, coupled with the recent tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut have placed a renewed focus on public safety and the need to make enhancements and improvements wherever possible. “The recent weather related emergencies that our Town has experienced has clearly underscored that the EMS service is an integral emergency service provider to the Town and should be on par with our police and fire departments. We must do everything we can to give them the support and resources that they need. The recent events in Newtown, Connecticut have also underscored the need for police, fire and EMS personnel to have a core synergy that will allow the Town to meet any public safety challenge that might confront us now and in the future. Chief Kiely and I are mutually committed to making sure these reforms are implemented.”

The next meeting of the Trumbull EMS Commission will be later this month.